

from Nov 23 1706
SEVERAL

LETTERS

FROM THE

Pastors of the Church of GENEVA,

TO THE

**Archbishop of CANTERBURY, the Bishop
of LONDON, and the University of
OXFORD,**

WITH

Their ANSWERS to them.

**faithfully Translated from the LATIN and FRENCH
ORIGINALS.**

LONDON

**Printed; And Sold by J. Morphew in Stationers-
Court near Ludgate-street, 1707. Price 3 d.**

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LETTERS from the Pastors of the Church of Geneva, &c. with A N- S W E R S thereunto.

A LETTER from the Pastors of GENEVA, &c.
to the Bishop of LONDON.

Most Reverend, most Illustrious and most Learned Prelate,

THE Churches of France were very desirous of an Emendation of the *Psalms* of David, that used to be sung in their publick Congregations, in the Native Tongue; partly, because the Verses whereof they were Composed, were by a long Tract of Time, rendred more intricate and difficult to be understood, and therefore proved not so proper for Edification, and the Ornament of Divine Worship; partly, because they saw them exposed to the scorn and derision of their Enemies. This being prevented by the Persecution of these Churches, many of the Banish'd Pastors of divers Provinces, made their Application to us upon this Head, and solicited by their Letters, to admit into our Publick Congregations, the Translation of *Conartus*, Councillor to the King of France; who at the instigation of the French Synods, had made a Correction of these *Psalms*. Finding their Request very equitable, and tending to the edification of the Church, we were willing to gratify them, and with the Approbation and Assistance of our Magistracy overcame all Obstacles that lay in the way. The Version being thus received in its pure and Native Simplicity, without the least incumbrance of Allegorical Expressions, and notice given by us to the French Churches of our good Success therein, without the least Desire or Admonition, for them to follow our Example; there have nevertheless bin some, who both in Words and Writing have charged our Church with Novelty, Scandal, and Popish Tyranny; and have attempted also, as we are inform'd, to defame us to his most Sacred Majesty. 'Tis that which makes us, imagine, most Illustrious Prelate, that the like Accusations may have bin brought to your Ears. Now, since we should be very sorry, that this Church, which stands so highly indebted to the Charity and Care of your Predecessors, should be reviled before you, we judged you would take it in good part, if what we have transacted in this matter, was laid in all Sincerity and Humility before your Grace, in all its circumstances as it is related here. Being satisfied and confiding in the Testimony of our own Consciences, we will not resort Slanders with Slander; And it is no slender Comfort to us, to find it tending to the Edification of our Flocks, who not only Approve of, but also Rejoyce much at this Correction. We also highly Congratulate our selves upon the Example of the Church of England, which, as we understand, has by your Direction, received a much purer and more polite Translation of the

Church Hymns or Psalms, than they were before. We beg you, most Reverend and most Illustrious Prelate, to continue your Benevolence (which is in the highest esteem with us) to our Church.

Geneva, Nov. XXVI.

In the year of our
Lord, MDCC.

Your most Reverend and most Illustrious Grace's most Obedient and most Devoted Admirers, the Pastors and Professors of the Church and University of Geneva, and in their behalf, *Lewis Trenchinus* Pastor and Professor of Divinity, then Moderator of the Ecclesiastical and Academical Assembly.

Anthony Leger, Pastor and Professor of Philosophy, Clerk.

The Bishop of London's ANSWER to the Pastors, &c. of Geneva's LETTER.

Most beloved Gentlemen and Brethren,

Tis with a great deal of Satisfaction on my side, I embrace the Occasion you have given me of your dear Correspondence, looking upon it, as a happy Omen of a more strict Alliance at this Conjunction; when the Common Interest of our Holy Religion is most furiously attack'd on all sides. At the same time, I am most sensibly afflicted, at the mishap befallen us at so unseasonable a time, on account of the New Translation of the *Psalms*. I don't question, but that, had you foreseen it would raise such a Storm, you would have prevented it by your Silence; whatever your Reasons or Designs might have bin otherwise. I am nevertheless much surprized that it should happen so, seeing it was no new thing, but long before resolved upon even by the Churches in *France*: And as for us of the Church of *England*, we make not the least scruple of admitting of New Translations, provided they are very well examin'd before hand. I hope, that, in case the matter be pass'd by, without taking any farther notice of it, every thing will remain quiet; and that Peace may be restor'd among you by degrees; which I wish with all my Heart, and pray God Almighty without Intermission for your Preservation.

Give me leave at the same time, to make you sensible of the great dissatisfaction I have received, that any thing should have happen'd here, which may seem as if we entertain'd any sinister Opinion of your Church. I understand you have received Intelligence concerning certain Verses, made at *Oxford* upon the Death of the late Duke of *Gloucester*, containing some unbecom'g Reflections upon *Geneva*. The Copy was sign'd by the Dean of *Christ's Colledge*, a Person as much addicted to the Interest of the Protestant Churches, as any Man in our Kingdom. But this unfortunate affair happened thus; 'Tis a custom in both our University's, to compose certain Verses or Poems upon such like Occasions; now, the Composition thereof being most commonly committed to such young Scholars, as have a Genius for Poetry, some-

sometimes some untoward things will slip in among them; and those, who are to sign the Copies, seldom examining what is written, but sending it to the Press, and leaving the care of the Correction, to him they call the *Mendus*, hence it is, that this mistake happened in your respect; This neglect, will I hope, make us to act with more Caution for the future. In the mean while be satisfy'd, that the Prejudice conceived against you, has bin much abated a considerable time ago, amongst those of our Church, and this Reflection must be attributed to nothing else, than the indiscreet reading of some Author or other of the last Age: For, I can assure you, that our present Church is absolutely disposed to recognize your Friendship, and to live with you in the Communion of Charity in our Lord *Jesus Christ*. I therefore begg of you, to assure the rest of your Venerable Pastors, our Brethren, of my Affection and Services, As I remain in particular,

London, March
XXXI. 1701.

Most Honoured Gentlemen and Brethren, your most
Humble and most obeissant Servant,

H. Londinens.

The Pastors, &c. of Geneva's LETTER *to the Arch-Bishop of*
CANTERBURY.

Most Illustrious, most Reverend, and most Learned Prelate.

Most Honoured Father in God,

BEing inform'd some Years ago, that a certain Poem in *Latin*, was Publish'd in the most Celebrated University of *Oxford*, containing certain contumelious Reflections, as if our Church as well as that of the *Roman Catholics*, stood in opposition to the Church of *England*; we, upon this account made our Complaints, to the most Illustrious and never sufficiently to be praised, Bishop of *London*. In his Answer he was pleased to send to two of our Assembly, that had sign'd our Letter to him, he made us hope, that for the future we should have no occasion of Complaint upon that point. But not long ago we have received further advice, that even in this Year, somebody (whose Name we know not) has made another Poem, which being approv'd of by the University, and under its Name offered to the Queen, by the Title of *Strena Oxonienses*, charges us with the same Crime, we can't but be most sensibly touch'd with so heavy and opprobrious a Charge; For, there being not so much as one single Person among us, but what has very honourable Sentiments, and speaks accordingly of your Episcopal Government; we can't but be highly concern'd, that we should be thus traduced on account of a matter, whereof if you knew our real Sentiments, you wou'd look upon us as deserving of your acknowledgment and good will. We are able to call to Witness in behalf of these Sentiments for your Government (not to mention what has bin Written in several Letters from hence into *England*) many Travellers of your best Nobility who have bin in this City; many of such who have Travelled in the Quality of Governours, besides others of less

Note

Note, who are well acquainted with us; amongst all these, we are apt to believe you will not meet with any one Man of Probity who will not give us a most ample Testimony of our most sincere Inclinations for your Government. 'Tis therefore, that we can't sufficiently admire, that so renown'd an University, adorn'd with so many most Excellent Doctors, should either out of an obsolete preconceived Opinion, or to gratify the Passions of a few, who are ignorant of our real Sentiments, continue to set us forth in so ignominious a manner: But, since this may by chance have happen'd, either because they have by this time forgot the most Reverend Prelates former Admonitions, or put too much Confidence in the Author of the Poem, we have presumed to address our selves to you, most Illustrious and most Reverend Prelate, that you would be pleas'd to gratify our request, and by that Authority and Influence you have over this most Celebrated University, to make its Doctors rightly sensible of our Sentiments, so that hereafter they may not suffer the Students, Fellows, or others of that University, to defame us at that rate against all Right and Reason: Neither do we question in the least, but that these Men so Famous for their Erudition and other Vertues, will be ready to follow your Admonition; because our Reputation, if clear'd in point of our Sentiments for your Ecclesiastical Government (which they declare for) may prove advantagious, or otherwise noxious to it. But as after they have bin fully convinced of our Opinion by this Letter of ours, so we hope they will not deny us justice, which is due to all Men. We beseech you most Illustrious Prelate, that by your assistance we may be freed at last from these troublesome reflections; and our real Sentiments be better known to that whole renown'd University. We beseech God to preserve you long in Prosperity, to give his abundant Blessing to your Holy endeavours, and his Protection for the Welfare of the Church of *England*.

Geneva, in the Name of the whole Ecclesiastical and Academical Assembly,
the *May*, 1705.

Your most Illustrious and most Reverend Dignities, most
Devote and most Obedient Admirers, *Lewis Tronchin*,
Pastor and Professor of Divinity, and now Moderator of the Assembly.

Benignus Mussard Clerk.

Their Second LETTER to the Bishop LONDON.

My Lord,

WE have not bin forgetful of the Goodness wherewith your Greatness was pleased to receive our Complaints some Years past, concerning some injurious Verses against us, inserted in a *Latin* Poem approv'd by the Famous University of *Oxford*. We also remember with a great deal of acknowledgement, the satisfaction your Grace gave us in a Letter, wherewith you honoured the two Members of our Assembly, who sign'd that sent from us to you. We hoped, that nothing of this Nature would have happened afterwards, considering the care your Grace told us you would take to prevent the like for the future. But we have understood, not without great dissatisfaction, that

that in a Poem stiled *Sirena Oxoniensis*, they have, in an Odious manner, join'd us with *Rome*; and represented our Churches, as equally an Enemy with that to the Church of *England*. It wou'd be superfluous to justify our selves to your Grace of this Acculation, you being perfectly well acquainted with our Sentiments, and knowing that there is not one only Person of our Body, who has not a most perfect esteem of your Episcopal Government, and who speaks not concerning it in very honourable Terms.

But we attempt once more to ask this favour of you, to undeceive again these Learned Doctors of this University, concerning the prejudices they may have conceived against us; and to prevail with them, that no Poet, or other Malicious Author, may any more impair the Reputation of a City, which, in that very regard, deserves rather the esteem, than the hatred and scorn of the Church of *England*; especially of those who declare most earnestly in her behalf. This is a piece of justice they cannot refuse us; for by accusing us wrongfully, instead of doing a piece of Service, they do Disservice to the Church of *England*, since the publick Declarations we make of our Approbation of its Government, may create a sinister Opinion of it in some of a different Sentiment. We have given our selves the Honour of Writing to my Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*. If your Greatness would do us the favour in conjunction with him, to prevail with these Doctors, to keep a more watchful Eye over the Poems, and other Writings of that University, we might live in hopes of seeing our selves freed from these publick injurious Reflections; and that, instead of misusing us, they will undeceive the young Students under their Tuition, concerning these sinister Opinions imprinted in them of us. We beg you my Lord, to pardon the freedom we take of making our application to your Grace; it being the true product of that Veneration we have for you, and of that high esteem we retain of your Justice and Inclinations towards us; as your high Merits confirm us in that high Respect, so it inclines us more and more, to lend up our most fervent Vows to Heaven, for your Preservation and Prosperity. We are, and always shall be, with all the most profound Submission,

Geneva, May the
5th. 1705.

My Lord, Your Graces most Humble and most Obedient Servants, the Pastors and Professors of the Church and University of *Geneva*, and in all their behalfs.

Tronchin Moderator. *Muffard* Secretary.

*A Letter from the University of OXFORD, to the Pastors
of GENEVA, &c.*

Most Renown'd, Most Learned, and most Honour'd,

YOUR Letter sent to us by the Reverend Father in God the Bishop of *London*, we received with joy, and were very acceptable to the University, being written by University Men of Piety, Erudition, and full of a most fervent Zeal for the Protestant Religion. What increas'd their favourable acceptance here, was, their coming to us accompanied with that Recommendation of that holy Prelate, a Person, who above all others, Loves with a most paternal Affection

Affection, and protects the Church of *England*, and even shews his Fraternal Love to all such of the Foreign Churches, wheresoever dispersed, who are in the Communion of the purity of the Faith.

Most beloved Brethren in Christ, We return you many thanks, that you would disclose in so friendly a stile, without the least alteration, the jealousy you had conceived at certain expressions, leaving a far different interpretation with Foreigners, than with us. We desire you, the best of our Friends, to continue as you do hitherto your Affection for us and our Church, and not to doubt on the other hand of our Benevolence towards you. We would also have you to be fully satisfied in this, that, if by chance something has bin said, that may seem Reflecting upon *Geneva*, the same not to have bin intended as injurious either to the Republick, or Church and Academy of *Geneva*; but to have bin apply'd only to such among us, as under the pretence of your Church, boldly and furiously oppose and recite our Church Ceremonies and Liturgy; separate themselves from the legal Congregations of the Church of *England*, and instead thereof frequent the *Schismatical* Meetings, and endeavour withal their might to subvert our Discipline, though Establish'd both by the Civil and Ecclesiastical Authority.

How far you abhor these Turbulent Spirits and Designs, is sufficiently manifested from those frequent Elogies bestow'd upon the Church of *England* by your Divines in their Writings; which are not a little improv'd by what you have exprels'd in your Letter lately sent to us; which has given us a fresh and most grateful Testimony of your good Inclinations towards the Church of *England*: Your worthy Approbation of our Church, will at all times be highly esteem'd among us, which would soon put an end to the Schisms in this Kingdom, if your Authority had in reality the same weight with those that dissent from us, as they pretend it has. Most Illustrious Friends; concerning the difference of Rites used in divers Churches, we have always bin of the same Opinion with you; for this you will find expressly laid down in our Liturgy and in the Articles of our Religion; That it belongs to every Church to make use of her Right of prescribing certain Ceremonies; and that it is not allowable for one Church to upbraid another, because she does introduce different Ceremonies. Far be it from our Charitable Intentions, to be so rigorous as to Condemn those of the Reformed Churches, which by an irresistible necessity, were forced to recede from the primitive form of Episcopal Government, as if they were destitute of true Pastors and Sacraments. Those of our most Celebrated Divines, who in their Travels abroad have made no scruple to resort to your Congregations, had certainly quite a different opinion of your Church; but the case of our *Schismatics* is quite different from yours, and we entertain quite other Sentiments of them; These, when they without necessity withdraw themselves from under the lawful Authority of the Bishops, produce *Geneva* as an example for their Defection; though that Authority is so far from standing them in any stead, that your Mr. Calvin has judg'd such worthy of the Severest Censure, that should not with all obedience and reverence comply with such an *Hierarchy* as we have now amongst us. Truly, it were to be wish'd, that the same most antient form of Governing the Church by Bishops, taught by Christ himself, the Author of our Faith, the Apostles, and instituted by them, being infused with the full measure of the Holy Ghost, remained in its full Vigour throughout the whole World to this day; this very Discipline founded upon more than Humane Authority, and by God's Providence transmitted to us through

through all the past Ages from the Apostles Times, We retain by Gods peculiar Benefice; which Benefice your *Beza* wish'd to continue amongst us for ever; and we in return, most heartily wish, that the same might be received among you, and in general, among all the Protestant Churches. This would be the way to make the Protestant Cause meet with better Success, if those that agree in the same Primitive Faith, would also Embrace the same Primitive Discipline; then they might promise themselves better fortune in the War against the Popish Tyranny, if with all our joint forces we did fight against the impious and detestable Popish Innovations, under the Ancient Apostolical Form of Government.

May these Prayers we send forth for your, and you for our Prosperity, prove valuable before God; may the same Christ, whom you make your Sun and Shield afford Light and Protection both to you and us, and may he enlighten at last all the Protestant Churches, and render them proof on all sides against the Arms of their Enemies. Given at *Oxford*, the 12th of *February*, And in the Year of our Lord MDCCVI. in a full Assembly of all the Doctors, both Regents and not Regents.

Attested by

George Cooper Notary Publick, and Register of the
Univerlity of *Oxford*.

The Bishop of London's ANSWER to the Second LETTER of the Pastors, &c. of Geneva.

Most Honoured Gentlemen and Brethren,

WHEN I received the last Letter written to me by your Body, I was at such a distance from *London* in the Country, that I could not return till towards the Conclusion of the Year; And whilst I was preparing to send you an Answer. I was seized with so Violent and long fits of the Gout, that at this very time I am not able to write to you with my own Hand. I am sorry, that so disagreeable an accident should have fallen out, which could make you suspect the sincerity of our Affections. However, it is not so much an ill Design, but rather an unhappy Custom, which has not bin able hitherto to be quite rooted out, among a sort of People, who either for want of time, or of penetrating rightly into all the qualifications, requisite to make all the nice Reflections upon the various chances, which our time has produced; It will not be amiss, Gentlemen, for me to tell you, that the source of that prejudice remaining among some against your Church to this day must be traced as far as the Reign of *Q. Mary*. Then one *Goodman*, with some other *English* Refugees, compiled in one of their Assemblies in your City, a certain body of Articles concerning Discipline, which being maintain'd with much heat by some Malecontents in *England*, caused great Troubles and Scandals both in Church and State, in *Q. Elizabeths* Reign; as the writers of those times, who undertook to refute this pernicious Anarchial Principles, often make mention of *Geneva*, not only because these Articles were first hatch'd there by *Goodman* and his followers; but also because it was judged that *Mr. Beza*, likewise did support them too much; it is no wonder, if some Persons either of no great Judgment,

ment, or very little versed in what passes in the World in our days, still retain now and then some remnants of this old Language. But Gentlemen, I dare give you my word, that there is scarce a Person deserving to be taken notice of either by you or us, who is not also lately satisfied with those obliging ways you have made use of, in regard of our Church; and who is not ready to discourage and to reprimand these disobliging and injurious expressions. I can assure you in particular, in behalf of the University of Oxford, That the Governours and Heads of the Colledges, are much dissatisfied with the indiscretion of those that make use of such odious Reflections; nay, they have even given me Authority to let you know in their Names, that for the future they will take great care to the best of their Power, to prevent and stifle such like inconsiderate expressions. As to what belongs to my self, Gentlemen, 'tis not needful to tell you once more, how sensible I am of those obliging assurances given to me both by you and the late Mr. Tronchin, of that due respect you intend always to preserve for the Discipline and Liturgy of our Church. I hope there is not so much as one of its true Members, but what is fully disposed to make it his utmost endeavours to encourage you in these favourable Sentiments; this obliges me to desire you to rest assured of my Affection and my Services; and to believe, that I am,

Fulham, April the
30th, 1706.

Most Honoured Gentlemen and Brethren, your most
Humble and most Obedient Servant and Brother,

H. London.

*The Pastors, &c. of Geneva's ANSWER, to the Bishop of
London's preceeding LETTER.*

My Lord,

WE did not receive your Graces Letter you were pleas'd to do us the Honour to write to us on the 30th of April last past, till some days ago, which was the Reason we had not this opportunity before of satisfying you of our Acknowledgment for your Goodness, in taking to heart our Interests, and to put us in mind of certain Members of the Church of England, who had taken very sinister impressions, concerning our Opinion of the Discipline and Liturgy of your Church. We have above all the rest seen, with much joy, the Effects, your Care, full of Piety and most exquisite Charity, has produced with the Gentlemen the Directors of the University of Oxford. We are very well satisfied with their manner of respect to us, and we are writing to them this day, to assure them of the esteem we have for the Church of England, of the disposition we are in to entertain a communion with them, as often as occasion shall present; of our respect for their Persons, and our desires of maintaining a Correspondence, which may prove for the general Benefit of the Protestant Churches, and the Glory of the Church of England; if these steps made on both sides produce any prosperous effect, 'tis to your Lordship we stand indebted for it. It now is in your Power, to make us enter into such Ties, as may be thought most expedient by you for the Peace of the Churches: Don't cease my Lord, to labour in so good a work, Heaven will send down its blessing upon your holy endeavours and we shall see the love of Peace to encrease from

from time to time in the flourishing Kingdoms of her Majesty. This Peace will doubtless much contribute towards the advancement of Truth and Piety, the Destruction of Vice, and encrease the Christian Liberty, oppress'd in many places by the Popish Tyranny. We, my Lord, implore God to preserve your Life, till you may see these happy successes, and the Products of these wonderful and surprising Events that have already happened during her Majesties Reign. For, what is it we may not promise our selves from these so happy Beginnings, and from such Events, as shew manifestly the hand of God to have bin with them? We beg of you to retain for us the same most precious Charity, you have given us proofs of already, as on our side we shall neglect nothing that may testify the esteem and respect due to your Greatness. We are My Lord,

Your most Humble and most Obedient Servants, the
Pastors and Professors of the Church and University
of Geneva, and in all their Names.

Anthony Leger, Pastor and Moderator, Fasn Secretary.

Their ANSWER to the LETTER of the University of OXFORD.

*Most Noble, most Famous, most Learned, most Honour'd and beloved Friends and
Brethren in Christ,*

WE were highly rejoiced at what the most Illustrious Prelate Henry Bishop of London was pleased to write to us, concerning your Charitable Sentiments for us: For being inform'd, that we were recited, and that the name of Geneva was rendred odious to you, he made known to us in your behalf, that there were certain old prejudices conceived and as yet retain'd by some; but what had bin alledged, was not applicable to our Case, but to certain Dissenters from the Discipline and Liturgy of the Church of England, who made use of our Names in their own behalf; but this most Illustrious Prelate was very sensible how far this was incongruous with our Sentiments: 'Tis so most Beloved and most Honoured Brethren in Christ; we are so far from having any antipathy against the Church of England, that at all times we have held her in very high esteem, and that not one of our Assembly during his stay in England, ever absented himself from their Congregations, or Ceremonies. There was a Correspondence by Letters betwixt our Pastors, but especially Calvin and Beza, and the Illustrious Prelates of England, and we never let slip any opportunity of testifying our esteem of your Confession of Faith and Liturgy, as is manifest out of divers Monuments. We have now got once more an opportunity, to receive and disclose what among some of you was either buried in oblivion, or quite unknown hitherto. We make use indeed of such Ceremonies, as were necessary and suitable to the Government of our Republick, nevertheless we neither reject nor condemn such as differ from us: For we believe, that the Faith in Jesus Christ, Love towards our Neighbours, and a Worship free from all Superstition and Idolatry, being sufficient to obtain Salvation, are not incompatible with those that differ only in Ceremonials. We wish therefore, that these
bonds.

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bonds of Christian Charity and Communion may not be broken; did we dwell among you, we should gladly appear at your Congregations, having nothing so much in view as to contribute our joint endeavours towards the Prosperity of all the Evangelical Churches; the Peace and Glory especially of that of *England*, and the overturning of the Popish Tyranny. As often as you judge we may be able to lend a helping hand to this, you will find us ready for the Work; as also to testify what we have said before concerning our Sentiments. We beseech you not to despise these Violent Passions of a sincere Love and Deference; for they shall not be buried in oblivion, but will serve as a means to encourage us to send up our Vows for you to God Almighty.

Geneva, September 23d.

Anno MDCCVI.

Your Admirers and Brethren in the Lord, the Pastors of the Church of Geneva, and the Professors of the University, and in all their Names.

Anthony Leger, Pastor, Professor of Philosophy, and now Moderator. *Fabr. Clerk.*

To the most Noble, most Excellent, and Right Reverend the Vice Chancellor, and the most Noble, most Celebrated and most Excellent, the Regents, Doctors, and other Reverend Members of the University of Oxford, at Oxford.

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